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PEACE BY INSTALLMENTS

By Constantin Fotitch

On February 10, the representatives of 21 nations will gather in Paris for the signing of the peace treaties with Italy and the former Axis satellites: Bulgaria, Finland, Hungary and Romania. To all these treaties except the one with Finland, with which country the United States was not at war, Secretary Byrnes affixed his signature on January 20, as his last official act as Secretary of State.

The coming ceremony in Paris should mark the beginning of the return to normal conditions in war-torn Europe, and consequently might well be hailed as a decisive step for the establishment of peace. But the announcement of this meeting, like the initial American action last week, was received by public opinion without any perceptible enthusiasm. Unfortunately there is no expectation that it will really bring consolidation and stabilization in Europe.

It took the Big Three 16 months of protracted negotiations to reach agreements on some irritating problems which frequently endangered their relations almost to the breaking point. Moreover, the value of the solutions reached will be determined only after their practicality has been tested in operation. The application of the compromise arrangements will depend above all on the good will and collaboration of all those directly concerned. The formulae in the text of the treaties will not in themselves be sufficient for the successful realization of these solutions.

The test case for the necessary good will is the newly-established "Free Territory" of Trieste. If Tito continues his policy of agitation -- which in all probability he will -- this arrangement could provide him with an excellent opportunity to nullify the painstaking work of the Big Three. Even without restoring to the extreme of seizing Trieste by coup d'état, Tito can choke the great Adriatic port by severing the city from railroad and road communications, and by cutting the utilities which are almost entirely under Yugoslavia's control, as was pointed out in HUMAN EVENTS in the article of December 18 on "The Trieste Compromise."

Another important problem which will put good will to a serious test is that of freedom of navigation on the Danube. It took the Big

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Three nearly a year to agree even on the affirmation of a principle which was part of the European public law for almost a century, until destroyed by Hitler. It will take a great deal of very real co-operation to put this principle back into practice and to assure free Danubian navigation for the flags of all nations.

II

There is a serious omission in all of these freshly-printed peace treaties. They do not contain any guarantees for the implementation of the political rights and personal freedom which they announce. Execution of this obligation is apparently left to the good will of the governments concerned.

In the decisions reached at Yalta in February, 1945, the Big Three announced their mutual agreement to work together "in assisting the peoples liberated from the domination of Nazi Germany and the former Axis satellite states of Europe to solve by democratic means their pressing political and economic problems." In addition to these general decisions, the Yalta Agreement has specific provisions for Poland and Yugoslavia in order to assure democratic regimes and free elections in those countries. And in reporting to Congress on the Yalta Conference, on March 1, 1945, President Roosevelt promised that:

> " . . . it will be a peace based on the sound and just principles of the Atlantic Charter -- on the concept of the dignity of the human being -- on the guarantees of tolerance and freedom of religious worship."

Yet, in spite of the Yalta Agreement, the peoples of most of the liberated countries in Eastern Europe are today ruled by totalitarian governments, dominated almost exclusively by the respective Communist parties. The regimes are disguised under the name of "National Front," in order to give the impression that they are truly representative of all elements. But they are, in fact, under the exclusive control of the Communist parties, against the will of the overwhelming majority of the people. The elections conducted in Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Romania have been a forgery of the popular will, and the terrorism behind the balloting in Poland on January 19 was of the same character.

The American and British Governments -- as signatories of the Yalta Agreement -- have repeatedly protested, although without much effect, against the violation of the Yalta obligations by Bulgaria, Romania and Poland. The United States Government, "mindful of the obligations which it assumed at Yalta," made known publicly (Dec. 22, 1945) that "the elections conducted in Yugoslavia on November 11 have not provided opportunities for a free choice of the people's representatives."

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In the same statement the United States Government made it clear that the establishment of diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia:

> " . . . should not be interpreted as implying approval of the regime, the methods of assuming control, or its failure to implement the guarantees of personal freedom promised to the people."

With the signing of the peace treaties, the Soviet satellite governments may be expected to claim that the Yalta Agreement was of a temporary nature, designed only to cover "the temporary period of instability in liberated Europe," and as such has come to an end. These governments are likely to maintain from now on that they are not bound by any special obligations, but only by general principles such as those embodied in the Charter of the United Nations.

III

Respect for democratic procedures, and guarantees of political and civil liberties in the liberated and former Axis satellite countries, as provided in the Yalta Agreement, have nevertheless been affirmed as fundamental principles of the public law of Europe. This is what Secretary Byrnes must have had in mind when he stated in his farewell speech at Cleveland on January 11: "We refuse to abandon the principles for which our country stands."

The obligations of the Yalta Agreement have certainly proven of little effect when confronted with the Soviet determination to impose puppet regimes in its zone of influence. Nevertheless, this Agreement places upon the Western democracies a freely-accepted and continuing responsibility to see that the Yalta provisions are put into effect, and particularly the obligation to help the liberated countries to establish through "free elections governments responsible to the will of the people."

This obligation has given the United States and Great Britain the continuing right to examine the nature of these regimes; to scrutinize their conduct of elections; and finally to attach conditions to, or withhold recognition from, these regimes.

Even if this intervention has not been very successful, at least it has prevented greater excesses on the part of the Communist dictatorships. And the enslaved peoples of these countries -- in spite of all their disillusionment -- still have hope that respect for the Yalta decisions will ultimately be imposed upon the dictators of their countries, and that they will be given the right to choose governments through free and unfettered elections, as President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill so definitely promised.

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In the interest of the peace of Europe it is of the utmost importance that the United States, in ratifying the peace treaties, should explicitly reaffirm that their entry into force will not affect the obligations of the Yalta Agreement. Such declaration will give confidence to the enslaved peoples of Europe and assure them that the United States is not preparing to abandon the principles which it so solemnly proclaimed, and which remain for them the guiding light in their resistance to oppression.

It would be inconceivable, after all that has been said, if nearly one hundred million people of Danubian and Eastern Europe were irretrievably sacrificed for the sake of Big Three "unity." These Europeans cannot be reduced to colonial status at the same time that the Trusteeship Committee of the United Nations is elaborating a charter of Human Rights for the people of the Pacific Islands.

When the pending treaties of peace are submitted to the Senate for consideration, that body before ratifying will no doubt wish to examine whether these still tentative instruments will actually contribute to the establishment of a lasting peace.

This will not be the case if the peoples of Eastern Europe are sacrificed for the sake of political expediency. The peace of Europe, and consequently of the world, cannot be assured if masses of men and women are deprived of basic human rights. Many of those nations have for generations enjoyed national independence and political freedom acquired by long and heroic struggle against their previous conquerors and oppressors. They have developed their own culture and their own political and social institutions, in harmony with Western ideals. They are not prepared to resign themselves to the loss of liberty, no matter what terror may be used against them.

From the Baltic to the Mediterranean these people will continue the struggle against imposed dictatorship until fulfillment of the Anglo-American assurance that it is their right "to choose freely the government and institutions under which as free men they wish to live."

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Constantin Fotitch is the former Ambassador of Yugoslavia to the United States and was earlier the representative of his Government on the Council of the League of Nations.

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Not Merely Gossip *A Supplement to* Human Events VOL. IV, NO. 5

By Frank C. Hanighen January 29, 1947

Preparations for the Moscow Conference are under way, and they are by no means confined to cleaning the Grand Hotel for the visitors and arranging details of protocol. It is no accident that an anti-German propaganda campaign has been launched at this juncture. The great question to be threshed out at the Conference is the disposition of Germany, and that really means the disposition of Europe. Hence those who hate Germans as a matter of ritual and those who profess such hatred in order to further Russian interests have redoubled their unlovely ministrations, the former with their real but unconfessed objective of exterminating the Germans, the latter to drive them into the arms of the Soviet Union.

The "line" today, nicely refurbished, is that Nazism and anti-Semitism are emerging again from the rubble of the Third Reich, and that after a year and a half of the mercies of democratic rule, the Germans still remain unregenerate -- and inferentially, therefore, beyond hope of redemption. Lord Vansittart and one of his committees -- with what prodigious celerity do such bodies give forth manifestos at just the right moment! -- has resumed the old Hymn of Hate. Having done everything possible, in collaboration with his American opposite number, Mr. Morgenthau, to keep the soil fertile for the growth of Nazism's ugly vegetation, the noble Lord now goes into his "I Told You So" act.

The signs of a Nazi Underground were noted many months ago, but today, on the eve of Moscow, it is convenient to dwell on them. Therefore, the old motifs of Vansittart appear, newly orchestrated: on the radio; in syndicated columns; in news stories and those telltale "letters to the editor." And one of the big targets of this campaign is General Clay's relaxation of the "denazification" policy, which policy has often been described in these pages as one of the major factors in creating the present economic and administrative chaos in Germany.

But there are counterforces, however hesitantly they may work. The State Department has lately come to a realization of the appalling results of our policy and the magnitude of the measures necessary to a revival of Germany, and therefore of Europe. Nevertheless, this enlightenment, while wholesome, leads to a dilemma. American public opinion must be informed of the actual situation before measures of such scope and expensiveness can be started. Yet the presentation of a true picture of the German situation might rebound on the Administration which bears the responsibility.

The Hoover mission to Germany may help to resolve the problem -- indeed one might reasonably infer that it was so designed. Be that as it may, Mr. Hoover is so widely respected (in non-Communist circles) that any opinion and advice which he may give can hardly go unheeded. And he has worked in so scrupulously fair a manner with Mr. Truman that he may be able to save faces, save money -- and perhaps save Europe.

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Differences of Opinion ---- Former Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson claims in his Harpers' article on the atom bomb that the missile had to be dropped on Hiroshima because there was a prospect of war with Japan lasting until well into 1946 and that there was no "weakening of the Japanese determination to fight." The Washington Post in rebuttal quotes the Strategic Bombing Survey: "The decision to seek ways and means to terminate the war, influenced in part by knowledge of the low state of [Japanese] popular morale, had been taken in May, 1945, by the [Japanese] Supreme War Guidance Council."

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Last week this column reported the opinion among former army officers that there is no military caste working for universal military service. A General phoned, after reading the story, to say that on the contrary there was a sort of caste, at least to the extent that many high officers wanted the draft so that they could retain their wartime rank. He remarked: "I don't know why the American people should pay eleven and a half billion dollars to keep two stars on my shoulders."

Senator Brien McMahon, of the Congressional Atomic Energy Committee, expressed his fear that the Soviets were making progress in manufacturing the atom bomb. A prominent international engineer, stressing the backwardness of Russian industrial methods, tells us: "In ten years, Russia may be able to turn out one bomb a year, while we will be turning out one a week."

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The Republican Party in the Senate last week showed itself not only in the saddle, but also holding a firm grip on the reins. Two tests, in which the Democratic minority sought to hand the Republicans votes of "no confidence," resulted in Republican victories, albeit by slim margins. While the photo finishes sprang from the widely publicized defection of a handful of Republicans, the scores would have been close in any case, since the November elections gave the GOP only a small majority. The fact that the numerous inexperienced freshmen rallied so well to the call of the party whips augurs favorably for Republican leadership.

The character of the few "rebels" indicates that they hardly deserve any such epithet as "sons of the wild jackass," which was applied to dissident Republicans in the Hoover era by conservative Senator Moses. Unlike the western progressive Republicans of the Twenties, no philosophy unites the three or four Republican mugwumps today. They have little in common save discontent with the mechanics of Senate leadership. Senator Tobey, the chief figure, scarcely ranks in the same class as the elder La Follette or Norris of Nebraska. There may yet arise a real division in the Republican Congressional delegation. A breach could develop between mountain and prairie state members, on the one hand, and those from industrial states, on the other. But it has not yet appeared and today no lack of basic unity seems to threaten Republican control of the Senate.

House Republican leadership rests unchallenged, due to the very considerable party majority. What unrest has emerged probably rises from the inexperience of the many new Congressmen. Another non-political factor may also have some bearing. The office of Sergeant at Arms normally acts as a sort of bank, where Congressmen may cash checks and obtain advances on their salaries. It is now closed, due to Democratic mishandling, and is under audit. New Congressmen especially, pinched by the unexpectedly high cost of Washington living, and without a financial backlog, are naturally not in a mood conducive to the discipline of the whips.

All in all, the Republicans are in much stronger control of Congress than is pictured in the daily press. The result should prove constructive, since the situation tends to make for party responsibility in shaping the legislative program.

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Ambassador Messersmith has left Washington for his post in Buenos Aires satisfied that the Braden policy has been shelved and that his mission will enjoy clear sailing -- according to reliable State Department sources. In his discussions with his colleagues, Messersmith emphasized how serious the situation had become because of the intransigence of Braden and how perilously near disaster was our whole structure of relations with Latin American states. Diplomatic circles are emphatic in saying that Messersmith has performed an excellent job in Argentina, even better than his widely praised missions to Mexico, Berlin and Vienna.

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Yet, as the Ambassador departed for his post, there came reports that Republican leaders in Congress had proposed a compromise solution of the Braden-Messersmith conflict. They advocate the transferral of both men to other posts and their replacement by two other men, as yet unnamed. This report has deeply disturbed diplomatic and military circles which regard any such "compromise" as inept and dangerous. It reflects no glory on the "Republican foreign policy leadership" which many have hoped would prove a constructive force. When at last a diplomat has been found who is capable of straightening out the disarray in which the Braden policy has left our "good neighbor" relations, it would seem idiotic to remove him from that position in order to save face for Braden.

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An event took place in the Near East within the past month, the historic significance of which has escaped the notice of the British and American press. First, four American oil companies, presumably with the consent of British interests, agreed to co-operate in the extraction, refining and transportation of the Saudi Arabian oil pool, probably the greatest field in the world. Second, the British government-owned Anglo Iranian Oil Company has consented to sell to American companies large quantities of oil. The agreements mark the end of one highly important phase of British imperial policy and the beginning of another.

As pointed out in HUMAN EVENTS, Behind the Near East Crisis, July 11, 1945, "Britain has used the Near East as a protective shield for its life line to the East, by a sedulous policy of non-development." Instead of building railways, roads, canals, refineries, etc., Britain kept this area a wilderness. The untracked and undeveloped desert served as a barrier to any military threat against the Suez Canal from the North. As a part of this policy, oil extraction in Iran and Iraq was traditionally held to a comparatively low level.

With the new American contract for a high level of pumping in the Iranian field, Britain has renounced its old policy of "underdevelopment" and joined in with the Americans in the exploitation of the whole Middle East field. Already great refineries are "cooking" crude and more are to come. The industrialization of the Middle East has commenced and the "wilderness shield" is a thing of the past, not the least because air power has rendered highly uncertain the protection of the Suez Canal and the Mediterranean life line.

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"War gaming" the plans of the State Department is a suggestion which will be offered to Secretary Marshall by some of his old advisers on the General Staff. As proposed for the State Department, the phrase carries no implications of war or belligerency. It is simply a technique utilized during the war by the General Staff planners, which might prove of considerable help in the formulation of diplomatic policies and in the preparations for international conferences.

"War gaming" in the Pentagon consisted of assigning to certain experts -- usually officers who had served as military attaches in Berlin, Rome or Tokyo -- roles as "the enemy"; to other experts the roles of "American commanders"; and finally of staging a mock campaign on maps and blackboards between the two "adversaries." The "enemy" would outline moves which the enemy staffs would presumably make in such a situation. The "Americans" then would recommend counter-moves. It is believed that this technique greatly contributed to our success in the war.

Transposed to State Department problems, "war gaming" should work out similarly. Experts on certain areas would play the part of diplomats from States in those areas, and their "plans" would enable "opposite experts" to devise American policies so as to be prepared for the great bargaining process which has always characterized diplomatic relations and international conferences.

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Notes and Quotes

An American recently returned after 12 years in Germany writes to a friend as follows: "The attitude of the German people toward the Americans after one year of occupation is unfortunately no longer what it was. . . . Now after a year, the Americans are often talked of as Die Russen mit Bügelfalten (Russians with pressed trousers). . . . From the Russians they expected nothing, but from the Americans they expected not 'good treatment' but other standards. . . . I am fully aware of the difficulties facing the American Military Government in Germany. Also, knowing the Americans, I am convinced that they are sincere in wanting to do a good job even though it may not always be apparent.

"But many an average German who sees things only from his small perspective can no longer be convinced of this. It seems the innate characteristic of every occupation army that it brings with it a false impression of the country behind it. I am sorry to say that I missed very much the good type of American that I would have liked to see over there -- they all went home very soon and it was always a source of regret to me that the majority of what remained was uncultured, uneducated and uninterested."

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A most vivid picture of what modern slavery means today, in a State once "the eastern bastion of democracy," is the remarkable utterance of Cardinal Mindszenty of Hungary, quoted in America, January 18: "Slavery existed longer than anywhere else on the Upper Nile, but now it has moved to the Danube. Under the Roman Empire men were sentenced to work in mines, and now the same thing is found in Czechoslovakia. . . . These human beings are being considered not as human beings but merely as objects. . . . Hungarians are brought to towns, and mine operators and farmers come and take men for their purposes. . . . Those left over are taken to another gathering place and are offered to another proprietor. Such markets have been established at Kolin, Pilsen and other localities throughout the Sudeten area."

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Cry in the Wilderness Department ---- "No foreign policy is consistent nor coherent over a period of years unless it is based upon some conception of human values. I know that we live in an age when it is fashionable to speak in terms only of hard realism in the conduct of international affairs. I realize also that at best the practice of any policy is a poor approximation of ideals upon which it may be based. I am sure, however, that in our national life we are continually influenced by the conceptions of good and evil which emerged from Hebrew and Greek civilization and which have been transformed and transmitted through the Christian traditions of the Western World.

"These are values which lay emphasis on the importance of the individual, on the place of moral principles in the conduct of human relations, on standards of judgment which transcend mere material well-being. They have ever influenced our national life as we have built a modern state from East to West across this continent. I am equally convinced that on the basis of this common experience we shall discern the same values in world affairs, and that we shall seek to protect and nurture them." -- The Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs, Mr. Louis St. Laurent, in Toronto, January 13.

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When General Marshall said that he could not be "considered as a candidate for political office" he drew the following wisecrack from one observer: "Marshall, wartime champion of conscription and peacetime protagonist of universal service, said when he arrived in Washington, 'I cannot be drafted.'"

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